

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
APRIL 22, 2019
APPLICATION FOR A HISTORIC SIGN PERMIT
SB-2019-0022563
607 CONGRESS AVENUE

PROPOSAL

Install a flush-mounted sign and blade sign.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

The proposed project has two parts:

- 1) Install a flush-mounted sign on the primary façade. The sign will be manufactured of aluminum, with flush painted and printed graphics. It will be 27" high and 108" wide, with an area of approximately 20 square feet.
- 2) Install a blade sign above the entrance. The sign will be manufactured of aluminum, with flush printed graphics. It will be 16" high and 24" wide, with a total area of approximately 2.67 square feet.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

Standards for signs in historic districts include:

Number of signs. The Commission allows one sign per building, unless the building has multiple tenants; in this case, the Commission may allow one sign per façade module, if the façade modules correspond to tenant spaces. The Commission may also allow one sign for each street frontage if the building is at an intersection. A single directory sign is appropriate for a large building with multiple tenants.

The proposed project includes two signs on a single storefront. The project does not meet this standard.

Sign types. The Commission may allow window signs, awning signs, projecting signs, and flush mounted signs for most commercial buildings. Freestanding signs are allowed for office and retail uses in historic residential buildings.

The proposed project meets this standard.

Sign size. The maximum size for signs depends on the sign type. Flush-mounted signs may be up to 7% of the overall façade area, with a maximum height of 2 feet and a maximum area of 20 square feet. Projecting (blade) signs may be up to 6 square feet.

The proposed blade sign is less than 6 square feet. The flush-mounted sign is slightly taller than 2 feet (2' 3") and has an area of approximately 20 square feet. The project mostly meets this standard.

Sign Design, Coloring and Materials. Use simple shapes, such as rectangular or oval signs. The Commission recommends painted wood or metal signs with matte finishes for all signs; plastic, reflective materials, and unfinished surfaces are not allowed. Limit the colors used in a sign to no more than three. For sites with multiple signs, all signs should have corresponding or matching designs, coloring and materials. Signs should match or complement the existing color scheme of the building to the maximum extent feasible.

The proposed project meets this standard.

Lettering. No more than two typefaces are allowed. Avoid lettering which appears too contemporary in the sign.

The proposed project meets this standard.

Lighting. Lighting must be indirect, and may be accomplished through shielded incandescent lights attached to the top of the sign, "halo" lighting, or recessed can lighting in awnings. Internally-lit cabinet signs are not allowed for signs on historic buildings or within the historic districts.

The proposed flush-mounted sign will be lit with gooseneck lights mounted on the building. The project meets this standard.

Neon Signs. Neon signs are prohibited on pre-1950 building facades; an exception may be made for existing pre-1950 neon signage, or with photographic proof of a historic (pre-1950) neon sign on the building, but only if the neon sign does not detract from the historic character of the building or area. The Commission may consider limited neon on a post-1950 façade, but encourages backlit neon over exposed neon.

Not applicable.

Sign Placement. Flush-mounted and projecting (blade) signs should be positioned near the business entrance immediately above the principal entry to the business. Single-tenant signs are not allowed over doorways serving multiple tenants. As required by the city land development code, the bottom of the sign shall be a minimum of nine (9) feet above the sidewalk. When feasible, place signs to align with others in the block. Signs should not obscure or cover architectural elements, such as windows, decorative banding, or other ornamentation.

The proposed flush-mounted sign blade sign is horizontally centered on the primary façade, and the blade sign is mounted above the entrance. The proposed project meets this standard.

Sign Mounting. New signs should utilize existing mounting apparatus whenever possible. If new bolt holes or brackets are necessary for sign installation, care should be taken to ensure that installation does not damage historic building materials in any way. Bolting through mortar joints avoids damage to historic stone or brick.

Not applicable, as the building is not contributing to the National Register historic district or a designated historic landmark.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Do not exceed the allowed number of signs (one); reduce the size of the flush sign. Staff suggested moving the blade sign over the entrance and/or making a V-shaped sign with two faces.

The size of the flush-mounted sign has been reduced.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Encourage the applicant to use only one sign.

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Photo



607 Congress Avenue.